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KINGDOM OF GOD SERIES

TEACHER'S MANUAL FOR THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

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TEACHER'S MANUAL
FOR
The Teachings of Jesus

BY
HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL

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Teachers of this course in The Teachings of Jesus should have the pupil's book as well as this manual. They will find either Huck's Synopsis of the First Three Gospels or Stevens and Burton's Harmony of the Gospels an invaluable aid.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS TO THE TEACHER

Two great ideas underlie the Kingdom of God Series. The first is the idea of the Kingdom. There is a Kingdom that is more than church in this world or heaven in the next; it is the new earth in which the Spirit of God shall rule men's hearts and homes, in which the good will of God shall be done in the factory and on the street, in the nation and among the nations of the earth. Back of these studies is the great thought that such a new world is coming.

The second great idea is that this Kingdom is a development. God is growing a world just as we see him growing Christians round about us. That this is God's method we can see by looking at the world round about us: God does not make things over suddenly by an outside force, but works gradually and from within. In other words, it is the principle of life working from within rather than a machine working from without. The Bible shows us that this has been his way in the past. We trace there God's increasing revelation of himself to men, and his increasing gift of his life in men.

In all your teaching of this course be sure to have these two great ideas stand out clearly before the class. See that they grasp its point of view at the very start.

The first year of this course considered the development of the Kingdom as shown in the Old Testament. Now we come to the central and supreme event in this story of the Kingdom, how God perfectly revealed himself in Jesus Christ, and how with Christ there began the new epoch in the making of the new earth.

The Teacher's Preparation

Two steps are necessary in the preparation of every lesson by the teacher. He must first master the material of the lesson; he must then plan how to teach it. Mastery of the material will best be accomplished by studying the chapter

in accordance with the "Suggestions for Study" on page 14 of the textbook. This involves, first, a grasp of the outline of each chapter, then a study of it in detail with the Scripture references, and finally a thoughtful consideration of the questions raised in the "Directions for Study" at the end of each chapter. Let your study be thorough, that your class may be enriched by it.

Distinguish clearly between your personal study of the lesson and your plan of teaching. Make your study as thorough as possible, then plan for the teaching of the lesson. (1) Each lesson is part of a larger campaign; connect it with what has gone before. This will make clearer its own meaning and will conserve your past work. (2) Each lesson may be considered a campaign. Decide what your object is to be and then the means of accomplishing it. (3) Learn how to omit. Center upon the main points you have selected and make these clear and strong by illustration and discussion.

Always think in terms of the minds of your class. They must do more than listen to you. *Plan to keep them actively judging and reflecting, forming and expressing opinions upon the material of the lesson.* See that as many as possible have the textbook and read and study. Make definite assignments and follow them up. Encourage the expression of opinions, especially when they are based on study. Help them to study by carefully explaining at the beginning the proper use of the textbook. Show them how to carry out the "Suggestions for Study" included there.

Guard against too many applications and too much moralizing. Make clear the teaching of Jesus and it will speak for itself. To make these teachings clear, however, and to make the work of the class vital and interesting, it will be well to illustrate the principles of Jesus by constant reference to present-day conditions and problems.

Concerning Reviewing

During this course a great deal of stress will be laid upon reviewing, and for two reasons. First, it is only thus that we can conserve results as we go along, fixing in mind what is important to retain. Second, by such reviewing we get hold

of the connection and meaning of the whole instead of being lost in details.

In such reviewing certain principles are important, whether the review cover a few lessons or a half year. (1) Review with a method. Find some plan by which you can state the principal points clearly, simply, and under a few main heads. (2) Select your material with great care. Pick out essentials, and do not confuse by the mass. Learn how to omit. (3) While taking up this old material, make each review as fresh and attractive as possible in its method.

The Use of the Bible

Finally, a word as to the use of the Bible in this course. Too often in our Bible study we simply pick out a few verses and ask, "What does it teach, and what must we do?" We have made the Bible a book of theology and a book of morals. But the Bible is far more than this: it is a book of life. In this course we shall study it as such; not as so many writings dropped down from heaven, but as the record of what God has been doing in men and with men. Our great interest will not be the letter of the writing, but the life out of which the writings grew. We must study this life, what it was, and how it came to be and what it meant. Such a study will make the Bible live for us as never before, and will make it not simply a story of life in the past, but a giver of life to us now.

HARRIS FRANKLIN RALL.

CHAPTER I

JESUS THE TEACHER

THIS course gives a wonderful opportunity. We are to take up the most interesting questions that can concern a man, and we are to study in each case the answer that has been given by the Master Teacher. Quicken your class with your own enthusiasm in the prospect of such a study.

I. Consider first Jesus' own estimate of this work of teaching. That estimate is seen (1) in the place which this work takes in his life; (2) in his own faith as a teacher. The former point gives us a welcome opportunity to look back over our study of the life. The second brings before us the parable of the sower. To most members of the class it will be a fresh and suggestive study to consider this parable as a confession of Jesus' own faith. Show how the church in her greatest days and her greatest leaders has shown her faith in the teaching and preaching of the truth. Think of Paul and Luther and Wesley, and the work of evangelism and missions to-day. With lesser men and lesser days there usually appears more reliance upon rules and creeds and forms maintained by ecclesiastical authority.

II. In the second half of the lesson we consider Jesus as the one who founded by his word (as well as by his life and death) the new world-faith.

(1) This appears in his entire independence of the authorities of his day and of the traditions which were held quite as sacred as Moses. But the special question here is his relation to the Old Testament. Leave time for this important matter. The practical result of the discussion should be twofold: to stir the class to a renewed study of that Bible (the Old Testament) which meant so much to Jesus, and the clear realization that the final authority for the Christian must be the mind of Christ.

(2) In discussing the "Ground of Jesus' Authority," we are considering this same question of authority as it lay in Jesus' consciousness. Here we face the interesting question as to what was new in Jesus, and what made him the founder of a new faith.

Notes and Comments

"THE TEACHER IS THE LIFE-SHARER. The educational process at bottom is the sharing of life." Such was Jesus' teaching and such all teaching should be. It is not merely giving information or training the intellect. It is the giving of self and the training of the spirit. People sometimes contrast education and regeneration; they insist that we should rely less upon culture and more upon the Holy Spirit. Back of this lies a mistaken conception of teaching. True education demands the Spirit of God as much as any Christian work or Christian experience. If the teacher is to share life, then the Spirit of God must be in the teacher. If the truth is to bring forth life in the pupil, then the Holy Spirit must use that truth. "Truth through personality" was Phillips Brooks's definition of preaching, and that is what true teaching is. It is not a substitute for the Holy Spirit, but an instrument. Indeed, Christian history from Jesus and Paul onward shows that this is the great instrument.

JESUS' USE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IS MOST SUGGESTIVE FOR THE CHRISTIAN.—We should live in our Bible as Jesus did. We should find those portions which are of special value and make them our own by thought and study. We shall thus build up a Bible within the Bible, composed of books and chapters and verses that really belong to us. We shall go back to them again and again as to tried friends. They will rise in our minds in hours of special trial, a word for our comfort, a psalm for the time of thanksgiving, a portion for any need. To this end we may well make Ruskin's word our own: "Make it the first morning business of your life to understand some part of the Bible clearly, and make it your daily business to obey it in all that you understand."

CHAPTER II

JESUS' METHOD AS TEACHER

HERE is a lesson unusually rich in material. Not all that is in it can be used, nor is that intended with any lesson. The wise selection of material is an important part of the planning for each Sunday's teaching. Plan, therefore, to bring out the three main points: the character of Jesus' teaching as personal and vital, its picture form as seen in likeness and parable, and the right and wrong way of interpreting his teaching.

The purpose of the lesson is to give a vivid picture of the Master's teaching, as well as guidance in its use. The interest and the profit of the lesson hour will largely depend upon the way in which the points are illustrated from Jesus' own words. Select examples carefully and give the class opportunity to furnish others.

It will be a profitable plan to ask the class to give from memory as many pictures or objects as they can from Jesus' teaching. Group under different heads: inanimate nature, plants and trees, birds and other animals, pictures of home and childhood, pictures from men's work, other figures. Another plan might be to call for a list of parables. Still another would be to read what is said about Jesus as poet, and then call for expressions as to the most beautiful passage in his teaching in respect to form.

Another interesting study is to make a list of some of the pictures of Paul and compare them with those of Jesus. Note that they are far fewer, less clear, more from the world of law and business and war.

Do not omit the last section, for here at the beginning of our study it is important to learn the right and the wrong way of handling the words of Jesus. This lesson is one which we as teachers need especially to keep in mind, and to which

we must turn again and again the thought of our classes. We need to give it especial study also in order that we may learn lessons for our own teaching. Four points at least we may learn from Jesus in this lesson.

(1) Let us make our teaching vital, considering those truths which mean something for the life of men.

(2) Let us secure "the point of contact," linking up our teaching with the interests and needs of those whom we lead.

(3) Let us make our teaching clear and simple.

(4) Let us learn how to use concrete material, the picture and the story.

Notes and Comments

THE ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL USED BY JESUS.—It is a study of deep interest and profit to gather together the pictures of Jesus, and it is a matter of astonishment to see how the whole of his Galilæan world is reflected in the brief gospel accounts of his words. Here is the world of nature, the sun that rises upon the evil and the good, the falling rain, the glowing sunset that betokens fair weather, the red of morning that presages the storm, the lightning's flash that runs from end to end of the heavens, the scorching heat that burns grass and flowers, the sudden tempest that fills the dry river bed and carries away the house that rested on the sands. He shows us the growing things, the fair flowers and quick-fading grass, the growing corn, first the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear; the field where wheat and tares are mingled together, the trodden path where the seed cannot spring up, the corner of the field where thorns and weeds crowd it out, and the bending heads of wheat that promise their hundredfold of harvest. There are the tiny mustard seed growing into a tree that can shelter the birds, and the reed that trembles in the wind, and the common weeds that are only for burning. We see the orchard, the fig tree putting forth its first leaves, and the unfruitful tree that must be digged about and fertilized. And there is the vineyard with its hedge and pit and watchtower and its fruit in season. Here are the living creatures too, the birds, carefree and yet cared for, the carrion birds drawn by the carcass,

the hungry flock swooping down to pick up the scattered grain, and the little sparrow whose dead body lies unnoticed by men, but whose fall is known to God. The birds come first in Jesus' sayings, but there are other creatures: the fox with his hole, the harmless dove, the serpent as symbol of wisdom, the dogs and swine who have no sense for pearls, the sheep who know their shepherd albeit sometimes straying foolishly, the wolf that attacks the sheep, the hen that gathers her brood.

Reflection of Actual Life.—How vividly the pictures of Jesus bring before us the busy human life of his day! There are the objects of the common life: the salt and the leaven, the lamp and its oil, the dung-hill for refuse, the wine and the wineskins, the cloth and the patches. We see men at their pleasure, sitting at the great supper, joining in the wedding feast with its special garment. We watch them at their daily duties: the farmer caring for his vineyard, sowing his grain, watching the growing crop and noting the weeds, separating the good from the bad in harvest. Here are the merchantman traveling in search of fine pearls, the fisherman sorting his catch, the shepherd looking after his sheep, the man who is so eager to buy the field because of the treasure he has found in it, the landowner giving special commissions to trusted servants. The servants appear just as we know them to-day, the faithful and honest, the faithless and incompetent, the shrewd and dishonest.

The Shadows.—There are shadows in the picture too. There are the men in the market place waiting to be hired. The master himself does not come, but simply sends a servant or slave; and some wait in vain for the chance to work. We note the long day with its heat and burden, and then watch the laborer at night, tired and hungry, first serving his master before he can take his own morsel. They sleep at night crowded together on the same bed, and the master has power to beat them with many stripes or even to cut his slaves asunder. There are poor men in debt: some being hurried off to prison, some sold as slaves. It is the picture of a cruel day. There is feasting at the table of the rich, with purple and fine linen, while out at the gate the beggar waits in vain

surrounded by prowling dogs. The blind and crippled and leprous meet us on the way. There are thieves in the city and robbers on the street and wretched prisoners bearing their cross to the place of terrible punishment.

Other Figures.—There are other figures: the rich farmer who is such a success in his own sight and such a failure before God, the men so busy with farm and wife and oxen that they have no time for higher things, and the unrighteous judge. Especially interesting are the pictures of the home and the children. We see the woman kneading her dough, the dark windowless house in which you must search long for your lost coin, the household perplexity over the unexpected guest. There is the meal time when the children gather about the table for their bread, while the dogs wait for the crumbs that may fall. There is the evening hour when the lamp on its stand gives light to all, and the night time when the door is bolted and the children are gathered safely in bed with the father. There are times of rejoicing when friends and neighbors are bidden, and days of sorrowful waiting for the one that is gone, and the hour of rejoicing with feast and dance when the lost son comes back. And the children! We see them coming in hungry from play or school, and receiving, not serpent or stone, but fish and bread. We watch them at their sport, playing funeral and wedding just as they might to-day. And then they stand before us once more to preach their lesson, that in the kingdom of God not the wise nor the rich nor the mighty stand first, but those who have the child's open heart and the child's trust and love.

CHAPTER III

THE FATHER

By way of introduction it might be shown how a man's thought of God shapes all the rest of his thinking, his thought of life, of duty, of religion, his hope for the future. That is one reason why we begin with this doctrine in the teaching of Jesus. But the main reason is that this was Jesus' greatest word to men, as it was the all-controlling reality of his life, God the Father.

Here, as elsewhere, it is helpful to compare Jesus' teaching with what went before, noting how he continues what went before and, on the other hand, how he surpasses it. In estimating the thought of the Old Testament about God we must not consider single passages here and there, but the dominant idea. Looking thus, we see that in the Old Testament God was King, in the New Testament he is Father. And yet for Jesus he is King as well as Father.

We have here another lesson in which we must simplify and select. The best plan will be to group the teaching around the two phrases used as headings: The King is Father; the Father is King. The purpose of the lesson is to bring out clearly this great conception of Jesus, and so lay the foundation for all the later study.

I. The King is Father. Note how simple this idea is as compared with other conceptions of God; a child can understand this. Show how rich it is and how much it involves. Then consider the tremendous faith of Jesus; he believed that love really sat on the throne of the world. Do we really believe that? That rather belongs to the second part:

II. The Father is King. This part of the lesson will need special emphasis and development. The old theologians emphasized God's sovereignty, modern thought emphasizes his Fatherhood; but Jesus includes both. We need a revival of this idea of sovereignty. Here are rich practical lessons.

(1) For the personal life, such a thought of the Father as King brings needed strength and confidence and peace. How wonderfully it brought this with Jesus!

(2) For our social life this idea of God's kingship is needed to bring reverence and a deeper sense of right and obligation.

Notes and Comments

God the Father.—So accustomed are we to think of God as Father that it is hard to realize that men have not always used this name. It is a mark of the spiritual ascendency of Jesus that this name, his name, is the one used everywhere in the world to-day. There were other names in his day for the relation of man and God, as there are still: King and subject, Lord and servant, Creator and works; but this is the truest and richest name. The mark of highest genius is simplicity. When Jesus said, "Father, son, brother," all men could know what he meant. And yet all these years have not exhausted the meaning of these words or enabled us to live up to their standard. To trust God as Father, to live with him as children, to live with men in a true brotherhood —this is still for the world its glorious and unachieved goal.

One of Our Deepest Needs to-Day Is Reverence.—We have not a real enough sense of God's power and his right to command. The attitude of children to parents, the common man's disregard of law when it does not agree with his ideas or his convenience, the use of intimidation and violence in some places by labor, the more subtle and dangerous anarchy sometimes employed by big business when they defeat the law by means of the law: all this has its root in a common lack of reverence. The fear of God is the beginning of wisdom for nation as well as individual. The revival that does not make a city more law-abiding is not a real revival. The adult Bible class that does not help to make towns dry and decent is not a success, whether it enrolls ten or ten hundred.

CHAPTER IV

THE HIGHER RIGHTEOUSNESS

A good introduction to this lesson may be found by taking Matthew 5. 20. Jesus had been criticized for his laxness in associating with sinners and in respect to the keeping of the law by his disciples and himself. Here he says: "I stand for a higher demand than do you. If men are not better than you require, they cannot enter the Kingdom." Our subject, therefore, is this higher righteousness. Our purpose is to show what it is that Jesus asks of men.

The theme, "Righteousness with the Jews," gives the teacher an excellent opportunity to look back upon our previous course in the life of Jesus. We should welcome every such chance at review when it can be made vital and pertinent. It helps to tie up what has been gained and to make the student feel the progress made. What place did this idea of righteousness have in the life of the day? What did the scribes mean by this?

After this little review, take up the theme proper by a study of Matthew 5. 17-48. Refer here to our study of Jesus' method of teaching and note how it is illustrated here: Jesus' discussion is almost all by means of concrete example and picture. But how it must have gone home! No question with these folks what he meant. Note, however, that back of these special examples lie the great principles: righteousness must be inner and spiritual, and it must be social.

The heart of the lesson is in the paragraph on "Righteousness as Sonship." This lesson might well be called "Sonship as Man's Task," and the next lesson "Sonship as God's Gift."

These years of war give added interest to the discussion of "Principles, and Not Rules." Men quote the words of Jesus on both sides, trying to make rules just as the scribes did with Moses. We must look to the inner spirit. We might

make our heading, "Spirit, and Not Rules." It is significant that Jesus, when struck by an officer of the Sanhedrin, did not turn the other cheek, but made a quiet protest. It was his duty just then to bear witness to the truth, but the incident shows the mistake of trying to make mechanical rules.

The end of this lesson should be an earnest questioning as to our own hearts and lives. Can we stand the test of Jesus? When we think of our righteousness, is it outward respectability and propriety and position that we have in mind, or is it the inmost spirit and thought and motive made like Christ?

Notes and Comments

Sex Obligations.—In his word about the impure glance, Jesus put his finger upon a great problem. More and more we are recognizing to-day the obligation that rests particularly upon fathers and mothers to teach their children the simple facts connected with the sexual life. We are realizing that it is their right to get these facts from us as parents, rather than through the chance channel of filthy companions, and to get them in time to save them from terrible errors. But Jesus points out the deeper task. The pure spirit must come before the pure body, and such purity means more than innocence. We must teach our boys to hate impurity as something selfish and cowardly. We must teach them reverence for all womanhood everywhere. And we must teach our young men and women a high reverence for themselves, and for all that is connected with that divine calling of parenthood by which men and women pass on to other generations the life that God has given to them.

Letter Versus Spirit.—Matthew 5. 18, 19 seems to be in direct contradiction to what has been said as to Jesus' fulfillment of the law and his emphasis upon the spirit as against the letter. Some hold that the first, or both of these verses, are a later addition. This might easily have occurred, for we know that the early church in large part did not understand Jesus' position with regard to the law; if they had done so, Paul would not have had his memorable conflict with certain Jewish Christians (read Galatians). Taken as a whole, Jesus' teaching and practice are perfectly clear: he does not

stand for obedience to every letter of the law as verse 18 states. It may be, however, that some such word was spoken by Jesus with this thought: "You have accused me of overturning the law. I am the one who is really establishing it. Not one bit of God's truth or God's will so far as it appears in the law is to pass away, but all is to be fulfilled by me."

Reverence.—Profanity is a sin that is fortunately growing less. The man who bolsters up his speech with oaths confesses by so doing that his ordinary speech has no weight with men. But ordinary profanity is not the only form of irreverence. There is a use of God's name in prayer that sometimes borders upon the irreverent. There is a style of sacred song which, to say the least, does not make for reverence. The same is true of the manner in which these songs are sometimes sung, with no thought of their meaning and apparently simply the effort to stir up cheap enthusiasm or other emotion. And there is a not infrequent slovenliness in public worship which looks the same way. Is our Sunday school worship, including its music, calculated to train our young people in reverence?

CHAPTER V

SONSHIP AS A GIFT

THE last lesson gives us in a nutshell the ethics of Jesus. Ethics treats of character and duty; it considers the question, What must I do? Jesus' answer is: "You must be a son of your Father; you must have his spirit of mercy and act according to it." Religion answers the question, What may I hope for? That is what we consider in this lesson, and we note that Jesus replies with the same word, sonship. Only, in this case the sonship is a gift; it is the fellowship, with all its privileges, into which the Father of mercy receives us.

The lesson is best opened up for the class by referring to the last lesson. Compare Jesus' standard with all the rules that others have ever laid down, and see how much more searching it is. It is, in fact, impossible for us. If that were all of Jesus' teaching there would be no "good news." This lesson shows how the impossible becomes possible.

First, we must turn back to Jesus' teaching about God; upon that we must always rest back. If God were only the Judge, then he would say, "You must be like me before you can associate with me"; and we should be forever shut out. But he is the Father who gives himself to his sons that they may become sons, whose rule of life is mercy. The gift of sonship is the gift of this fellowship, and this fellowship is the power of a new life in us.

There is a fine opportunity in this lesson to make fresh and clear and beautiful some of the great doctrines which have been too much disputed over in the past, and which are too much neglected to-day. In the past we have used the words of theologians, or perhaps the forms of Paul. We have failed to see these great truths in the teaching of Jesus just because he did not use these phrases. But the great truths are there in his simple speech, and all the better because the speech is simple.

Take a careful look at some of them. Forgiveness means the Father receiving his sons. Regeneration means his giving to us the spirit of sons. Sanctification means our belonging to him as sons, and our being made over into his spirit, just as sons become like their fathers when they have true fellowship together. Holiness is simply the character of those sons who have become like their Father in his spirit of love. And all this spirit of the true son, the spirit by which we call God Father, the spirit by which we love like our Father, is God's Spirit in us and God's gift to us; that is the Holy Spirit.

Notes and Comments

HOLINESS IN JESUS' TERMS.—In many ways it would mark a great gain if we could turn to the simpler words of Jesus in speaking about the Christian life. Men have disputed about the meaning of holiness. It is more an Old Testament phrase and carries something of the negative over with it. But there is no doubt what Jesus means when he puts love and good will in its place, or when he tells what he means by righteousness. It is so with words like regeneration and sanctification, which we have taken from Paul. Especially with young people, or when there is danger of misunderstanding, it is better to use Jesus' manner of speaking of the life with God.

A MUTUAL RELATIONSHIP.—As far as God's Fatherhood is concerned, it must be remembered that while he sends his rain on the just and the unjust, his highest gifts come only to those who love and trust in return. Fatherhood and sonship form a mutual relation that can exist in the full sense only when man's love and devotion answer to God's love and mercy. Only between the Father and the Son is that relation perfectly realized. Jesus' greatest gift lay in this, that he lived the true life of a Son with the Father and so showed us the way.

CHAPTER VI

SIN, REPENTANCE, AND FAITH

We have seen that the teaching of Jesus is not systematic. That appears in this lesson. In studying Jesus as teacher we must not yield to the temptation to turn our Gospels into textbooks on theology. But this lesson also illustrates another most important point for us as teachers: Jesus' teaching forms a whole, and what he has to say on any theme grows out of a great central faith. That center of his life and faith is his thought of God.

Begin this lesson, therefore, with a brief summing up of what we gained from the last three lessons about God and the life of man, the life that God asks, and the life that he gives. As each of the three points of our present lesson is taken up, relate it to this previous teaching.

A good statement of the general theme of the lesson might be: Jesus' teaching about the gate to life. What does Jesus ask of men who wish to begin the Christian life? Show how simple Jesus' demand was. The poorest and most ignorant sinner could meet it, as well as the little child. On the other hand, note how severe and searching that same simple demand is.

A good plan for teaching is to take up the three topics of the lesson as shown in the discussion. "Sin" is a word that means many things, usually to us the wrong thing that the other man does. What did it mean to the Pharisees? What does it mean to us? Ask the men of the class what idea comes to their mind when you say sin. Now, what did it mean to Jesus? What was the heart of sin with Jesus? How has Christianity deepened the sense of sin? Here note how Jesus' idea of righteousness makes plain what sin is—not so much this act or that, as a wrong inner spirit. So his idea of God reveals the darkness of sin.

Repentance is another word that we must rescue from narrow and false conceptions. What does it mean to most men? Something merely emotional and rather weak? Or do they think of it as a particular stage to be gone through with in a process of conversion? Some modern applications will help the class to realize how vital and necessary repentance is. Take the problem of war. How can we overcome this curse until there is a change of mind and a great hatred of war, of the whole theory of militarism with its doctrines that might makes right? So there must be a deep and real repentance before we shall overcome the great evils of state and of industry in our land.

In the same way in speaking of faith, bring out the common conception; then show the simple and vital meaning with Jesus, and how his thought of God as loving Father makes necessary this idea of faith (obedient and loving trust) as supreme in the Christian life.

Notes and Comments

How to Waken Repentance.—In an early day men were wont to say, "We must first preach the law and its terrors to waken in men a sense of sin and the impulse to repentance." There is some truth in this. There is no strong Christian living that has not first of all a high ideal of righteousness and of its supreme demand upon us. We must first see "the Lord high and lifted up." The question is, Where shall we see this Lord, and how shall we hold up this righteousness? Not by going to Sinai! The highest righteousness for us is not the ancient law, but the spirit and life of our Lord. It is that with which we must shame the impurity of modern life, and condemn its hardness and greed. Not till we see God's love in Christ do we realize what it is against which we have sinned, and how mean our selfishness is as against the life of such love. And it is the cross of Christ that supremely reveals alike the loving holiness of God, the loyal spirit of Christ, and the darkness of our sin.

Passion and Power.—In Jesus' idea of repentance we see one secret of his power, and that is the place which he gives to passion in religion. While repentance means a change of

thought and of will, it means above all the stirring of a great emotion in the heart, a moral passion. Now, moral passion and moral power go together. The morality of mere duty brings tasks, but no strength; it may call forth the assent of the mind, but it stirs no deep desire in the heart. Such a new passion Jesus kindled. First of all, it was a deep tide of penitence. And then he set before men the new life not as a mere task, but as a deep and pure love, a great longing, a flaming devotion to a great cause and a great leader. In that hatred of sin and that new longing for God the old sinful passions were consumed. So Jesus opened the way to freedom, for no man is free from his sins until he is set free from the old desires by a new and deeper passion.

An Abiding Task.—Repentance is often thought of as a mere preliminary to conversion, a single experience in the Christian life. It should be, on the contrary, a permanent element in Christian experience. That does not mean that men should keep on bewailing their past sins; but every day should see us turn away from sin with renewed hatred, and every day should see us looking toward God and good with new desire.

Simplicity of Christian Life.—We need to regain the simplicity of Jesus' teaching concerning the Christian life, especially the beginning of it. We have set up gates and doors at the entrance of the Christian life which we have had no right to erect. We have said, You must first have such and such an experience; or, You must accept this or that creed; or, You must agree to obey this or that set of rules. Have we the right to demand more than Jesus did? He said: "Arise and follow me. Turn from your sin and trust in me." But Jesus' word, though simpler than ours, has often been, and is, far more searching. Every day we are to face about from all sin, every day we are to say "yes" to him with whole heart and single will.

CHAPTER VII

HUMILITY AND ASPIRATION

We begin now a series of seven chapters in which we shall study the Christian life and character, first as related to God, then as related to men. On the one hand connect each study closely with the teaching of Jesus about God, on the other hand seek constantly for illustration and guidance in the life and spirit of Christ himself.

"Vitality is a matter of emphasis," one discerning thinker has said. That is to be remembered in this lesson and may be used by way of introduction. What does it mean that he placed the Beatitudes here at the very opening of the Sermon on the Mount? Bring out the contrast between this emphasis of Jesus and the common view of men even yet.

Take up first the question of humility. Bring out from the members of the class or otherwise what the common view of this is. What is the real thought of Jesus here? Show how humility and strength go together. Note, for example, how Lincoln before his inauguration took wide counsel as to his Cabinet and other matters. There was a certain fine humility about him; but the men who thought he would be wax in the hands of stronger men were soon undeceived.

Connect the idea of aspiration with Jesus' message as to the higher righteousness. If all our life be a gift from God, then this longing is our first need.

Consider carefully the Scripture references in this lesson, the Beatitudes and the two references concerning the child. The Beatitudes are not a general introduction in beautiful phrases; the heart of Jesus' teaching is here.

This lesson is full of practical suggestions and problems. Leave time for some of these. Does your church appreciate the child problem, or, rather, the child opportunity? Have you an adequate program for the child, and is the whole

church behind it? Does the child have a fair chance in your community? Count up the things that a Christian community ought to offer to every child in it: for example, decent and wholesome physical surroundings, good schools and a chance to attend, right moral surroundings (no saloons and dives), wholesome recreation and organized play.

As a fine illustration of humility and aspiration, note Philippians 3. 7-14. Find other examples in the Bible and out of it.

Notes and Comments

Two Classes of Men.—We often speak of men as good and bad. We have no real right to classify men that way. Jesus declared that there was but one Being who was absolutely good, and that was God. And he seems not to have thought of any man as utterly bad. Good and evil are mixed in human lives; there is no perfectly good, no utterly bad. Life here is in the making. The real question is, not what a man is, but what he is becoming. The real division is between the men who are growing bad and the men who are becoming good. Ruskin is right: "The man who is not growing better is no longer good." The satisfied man is the one who is in danger. The time of peril is not always that of youth, with its hot passions. Why does there come so often the moral breakdown in middle life? Is it not because men become satisfied, and lose their sense of need, their humility, and their desire? On the other hand, heaven is full of joy and high hope when the poorest wretch from the depth of his sin lifts his face in a prayer. The long road does not matter, if only he has turned toward God.

What Jesus Condemns is as significant as what he praises. He does not spend his time in assailing profanity, dishonesty, drunkenness, and sexual immorality. These were evil, and men knew it. But men did not see what was the very heart of all evil: to be satisfied and indifferent.

A Picture from the Dark Continent.—Here is a picture of Mackay of Uganda that shows us how humility and power go together. It comes from Stanley: "He has no time to fret and groan and weep; and God knows, if ever man had reason

to think of graves and worms and oblivion, and to be doleful and lonely and sad, Mackay had, when, after murdering his bishop and burning his pupils, strangling his converts and clubbing to death his dark friends, Mwanga turned his eye of death on him. And yet the little man met it with calm blue eyes that never winked. To see one man of this kind working day after day for twelve years bravely, and without a syllable of complaint or a moan amid the wilderness, and to hear him lead his little flock to show forth God's loving-kindness in the morning and his faithfulness every night, is worth going a long journey for the moral courage and contentment one derives from it." The secret of all this comes in the words of Mackay's fellow worker: "Very humble, very weak, very childlike, was he on his knees before God; very bold, very strong, very manly afterward, when he bore for three hours the browbeating and bullying of Mwanga and his chiefs."

CHAPTER VIII

DEVOTION AND TRUST

NOTHING seemed easier in Jesus' day than to become his disciple; and nothing seems simpler than the life to which he called men. But just as soon as we look into that life more closely, we see how rich it is. This lesson leads us into the very heart of that life. Note the four divisions.

I. The demand: Obedience, or devotion. How wide-open Jesus flung the door! Anyone could come in: harlot, publican, ignorant, outcast. But how searching is his invitation! Anyone may come, but it must be with the whole heart. "Narrow is the gate, and straitened the way." Some things must be left behind: selfishness cannot get through, nor any manner of sin.

Now bring out the practical aspect, that this life of obedience and decision, this life with a single aim, is the strong and satisfying life. The narrow gate has a positive as well as a negative side. Let the stream spread out and it has no power. Shut the water up and it will turn mills, light cities, dig out metals, drive railway trains. Find instances of men with one positive aim who have won out.

II. The life of trust. Consider anxiety as a disease and what it means for health. Consider it as a sin; why did Jesus hold it such? Then take his life of trust. This is not to "sit and sing ourselves away to everlasting bliss." Trust means joy and peace, but it means action too. Fear paralyzes, faith empowers and sets free. Find illustrations of this power of faith in big enterprises of business and state. Did any man ever do a big thing without it? Note advertisements which offer to teach men confidence as the key to success.

III. Consider the close relation between obedience and trust, how each demands the other. Are there people trying to live the life of trust and peace who have never paid the price of whole-hearted surrender?

IV. Bring out some of the rich practical lessons and applications. Note especially the material given in Notes and Comments, and let this suggest illustrations of your own.

Notes and Comments

MAZZINI ON FAITH.—Mazzini, the great Italian patriot, has well shown how devotion to a great end and the spirit of trust go together to make a life of faith. "Faith requires an aim capable of embracing life as a whole, of concentrating all its manifestations, of directing its various modes of activity, or of repressing them all in favor of one alone. It requires an earnest, unalterable conviction that that aim will be realized; a profound belief in a mission, and the obligation to fulfill it; and the consciousness of a supreme power watching over the path of the faithful toward its accomplishment. These elements are indispensable to faith; and where any one of these is wanting we shall have sets, schools, political parties, but no faith, no constant hourly sacrifice for the sake of a great religious idea."

THE CURE FOR WORRY.—Worry is a form of poison that weakens a man and wears him out more quickly than the hardest work. There are two cures for worry. One is the cure of fatalism: everything is decided and worry makes no difference, therefore do not worry. There is a Chinese saying: "The legs of the stork are long and the legs of the duck are short. You cannot make the legs of the stork short, neither can you make the legs of the duck long. Why worry?" But worry is not overcome simply by pointing out its foolishness. The only cure for worry is a real faith. It does not do much good to hang "Don't Worry" mottoes on your walls, if you have no strong faith in God in your heart.

EMERSON ON FAITH.—"All great ages have been ages of belief. I mean, when there was any extraordinary power of performance, when great national movements began, when arts appeared, when heroes existed, when poems were made, the human soul was in earnest."

CHAPTER IX

PRAYER

This lesson affords an excellent occasion, not for a formal review, but for a summary of the last chapters which have treated the Christian life. For prayer is not so much one part of the Christian life as it is the expression of the whole of that life in a particular manner. It will be least confusing to follow the general outline of the lesson discussion in arranging the plan of teaching.

I. Jesus encourages men to pray. Note that Jesus does not command men to pray, or lay down rules as to how often they must pray or what they should say. The Lord's Prayer was not a prescription, but a help and guide. He speaks of prayer as of a great privilege, a rich and satisfying life into which he wishes to lead men. So his words are largely words of encouragement, pointing out what kind of a Father they have, how readily they should go to him, how confidently they might trust him. Is not that the first thing that men need to-day, to be encouraged to go oftener to God?

II. Set forth clearly the nature of prayer. First, disabuse men of the idea that prayer is mere petition. That is the idea of primitive man, for whom God is a power that can give. For us God is still a power that can give, but his greatest gift is himself. Real prayer is talking with God, not merely asking from God. Now point out how all aspects of the Christian life come to expression in prayer: repentance, humility, desire, obedience, love, trust.

III. How shall men pray? The question is largely answered if we make clear the principle that we are to have faith in God and not in our prayers. It is a contradiction to ask men to trust and obey at other times, but in prayer to insist upon the wisdom of their own choice and the assertion of their own will. Bring out suggestions, coming from practical experience, as to helpful ways in prayer. Note the para-

graph "Prayer Ruts." Get a supply of the little booklet, *The Practice of the Presence of God the Best Rule of a Holy Life*, by Brother Lawrence. They would cost fifteen cents apiece, or less in quantity. Give the class a chance to buy them. Another fine book is Fosdick, *The Meaning of Prayer*.

IV. Distinguish between importunity in prayer and perseverance in praying. In the former we are trying to bring God our way, in the latter to bring ourselves to God's way. Remember, mere time does not count. If you have fifteen minutes, it might be best to use ten in reading and meditating. Listening to God is one way of praying.

V. Study the Lord's Prayer and the Lord's praying.

Some of the above will have to be omitted. Choose for your emphasis what will be most vital and most valuable to the class.

Notes and Comments

Prayer and Power.—Prayer is the source of all power. That is not hard to understand if we will but reflect. All higher life comes through personal fellowship. The supreme fellowship is that with God. And prayer, the prayer of trustful obedience, is the open door of the spirit by which God comes in. There is only one way to overcome what is low in our life, and that is to live in the presence of the high. It has been well said, "Your prayer will kill your sin, or your sin will kill your prayer." There is one sure way to conquer sin, and that is to bring each day that impurity, or that envy or selfish ambition, into the presence of God with honest confession and prayer for victory. Such waiting before God means the reenforcement of all good.

Prayer Ruts.—"Get out of the ruts of prayer. Pray sometimes standing up; then pray kneeling; then pray sitting down; then pray lying down on your couch at night. Pray in the morning when the sun first streams in at your window. Pray at noonday when you stand up at the lunch counter in some big city. Pray at night when you go to the place of recreation. Never go to any place where prayer is impossible. Pray sometimes alone when nobody hears. Then get some dear friend to kneel down and lead you in prayer, and when

your lips are dry and your heart is dull, that friend may lift you up to God."—*W. H. P. Faunce.*

THE PRACTICE OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD.—One of the best little booklets on prayer is that called *The Practice of the Presence of God the Best Rule of a Holy Life.* It contains the words of Brother Lawrence, a humble and uneducated man, who was a lay brother in the order of the barefooted Carmelites in France two hundred and fifty years ago. Brother Lawrence held "that we should establish ourselves in a sense of God's presence by continually conversing with him." In order to form such a habit, and to refer all we do to him, "we must first apply to him with some diligence: but that after a little care we should find his love inwardly excite us to it without any difficulty." "Our sanctification did not depend upon changing our works, but in doing that for God's sake which we commonly do for our own." "His prayer was nothing else, but a sense of the presence of God, his soul being at that time insensible to everything but divine love: and when the appointed times of prayer were past, he found no difference, because he still continued with God, praising and blessing him with all his might, so that he passed his life in continual joy." "We ought, once for all, heartily to put our whole trust in God, and make a total surrender of ourselves to him, secure that he would not deceive us."

A COOK BY GOD'S GRACE.—Brother Lawrence's work was that of a cook. When he began his work he would say: "O my God, since thou art with me, and I must now, in obedience to thy commands, apply my mind to these outward things, I beseech thee to grant me the grace to continue in thy presence; and to this end do thou prosper me with thy assistance, receive all my works, and possess all my affections." As he proceeded with his work, he continued this familiar conversation. When he had finished, he examined himself. If he had done well, he gave thanks to God; if ill, he asked pardon, but continued his exercise of the presence of God. "Thus by rising after my falls, and by frequently renewed acts of faith and love, I am come to a state wherein it would be as difficult for me not to think of God as it was at first to accustom myself to it."

CHAPTER X

THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD

This is one of the turning points in the course where a special review will be of value. God as Father and man as son—these are the fundamental ideas in Jesus' teaching, and these we took up in Chapters III to V. Next followed four chapters on man's life with God. Call briefly to mind the great ideas of these last chapters: how this life means a turning in sorrow from sin and a trustful surrender, how it means openness of heart and humble but eager desire, its character of utter devotion to God in trust and obedience, and finally its character as a life of fellowship which finds expression in prayer. Thus Jesus pictures the son's life with his Father.

The next four chapters show how the son is to live with his brothers. These will be found to be full of material of great practical interest and value. In each of them we should aim at three things: (1) to interpret clearly and correctly the material in the biblical references, (2) to grasp the underlying principle which forms the theme of the chapter, (3) to illustrate and enforce the practical meaning for the life of to-day.

Relate the first chapter on the "Law of Brotherhood" to Jesus' teaching about God's Fatherhood. This law of brotherhood really includes the next three chapters, and all four might be considered as the Law of Sonship. All four of them simply make plain how men will act toward their brothers if the spirit of the Father is in them.

The Bible material is not to be taken up in detail, but only from the point of view of the special theme of this lesson. In Luke 15. 11-32 we have usually looked at the younger son and called this the parable of the prodigal. As a matter of fact the message of the parable is given in the pictures of the father and the elder brother. The former shows us the right

spirit of men in relation to their brothers, the latter the wrong spirit. In discussing Matthew 5. 38-48, recall what was said in Chapter II about Jesus' method of teaching.

Religion according to Jesus is not a simple line between man and God, but, rather, a triangle whose three points are God, man, and man's brother. Brotherhood is not an incidental duty, but an essential and central part of man's life as a son of God. Religion without brotherhood is no more Christian religion than religion without Fatherhood.

The practical aspects of this question are very suggestive. Think of the Christian life as "being a brother." Note how perfectly simple this is and yet how deep it goes and how far it reaches. Let us test our own lives by this question: How much attention do we give to the matter of being a brother? Is that the dominant fact in our life as a church? Is the Methodist Church doing its best to be brother to the man in China, in India, in Africa, and Korea? Does that describe the spirit of our own local church? Does that spirit show itself simply in shaking hands, or does it appear in practical all-the-week service?

Notes and Comments

A League for the Practice of Brotherhood.—Every church should be a league of men for the practice of brotherhood. The atmosphere of brotherhood should fill the church, so that every one who comes near it should feel it. That does not mean a noisy demonstration of friendship, but a spirit of earnest good will and eager interest reaching out to every one in need. The "Big Brother" movement, organized some years ago in New York, seeks to bring together the boy that has gotten into trouble, especially in connection with the courts, and some man who will be a friend to him. Such a boy may not need money or a job, but he does need a big brother, a man who will be interested in him and keep in touch with him year in and year out. Every community has boys who need big brothers, girls without the right home life or with meager privilege who need big sisters, and many others who have similar need: old folks, invalids, men out of work, tired mothers to whom some brother or sister with

a motor car could give a bit of release, the man hard pressed in business who needs cheering up, lonely folks, and people with sorrows.

No True Democracy Without Christian Brotherhood.—Democracy expresses in political organization and industrial life the Christian ideal of brotherhood. It stands for the rights of all as against the power or the privilege of the few. It is a Christian conception. What men have often failed to see is that there can be no true or lasting democracy that has not behind it the Christian faith in God as Father and the Christian ideal of brotherhood. The French Revolution had its cry of liberty, equality, and fraternity, but it went down in bloodshed because there was no true spirit of brotherhood back of these words. Men clamored for their rights, but they forgot righteousness, the rights of others. There was no reverence for man as man and for all men, no true spirit of unselfish devotion to the whole. And it is this regard for man as man, this devotion to the common life that will make us think and pray and work and vote, that must save our land from its ills and build it up as a true Christian democracy. The reverence for every man as one of the Father's children, and the love for every man as brother, are the two pillars upon which democracy must rest.

Brotherhood and Modern Life.—Our modern industrial life forms one of the most serious problems for brotherhood. The old relation between employer and employee was direct and personal, and could easily be made brotherly. Master and men often worked together. To-day we have great corporations like our railways, where the personal touch is impossible between employer and workman. For the stockholders, who are the real employers, may be thousands in number, and have no relation at all to the men who work. And the men themselves are a great army of scores of thousands in an elaborate organization. In other ways modern life has tended to separate men in this land. Industry has made a smaller number very rich, and these live mainly by themselves. On the other hand, vast numbers must live in crowded tenements and form a distinct and separate community. Then we have separation according to race, a little Italy here, and a ghetto

there, and the increasing tendency to segregate the colored population in the cities.

THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH.—Here is the plain duty of the Christian Church. The spirit of brotherhood must break down barriers. That does not mean that people are to be made alike and all differences leveled. To do that you would have to level down. It does mean that there must be brotherly knowledge and sympathy. There must be mutual understanding and the spirit of helpfulness. There must be an earnest consideration of each for the rights of others, an earnest desire to promote their welfare. That which unites us is greater than that which divides, and we must emphasize it; for we are all children of one Father, and we are all under one law of love and service. The spirit of aloofness, the appeal to prejudice, the insistence upon right and privilege, the note of contempt or hatred, these are the real dangers to our land to-day, and they are sins against Jesus Christ in the person of his brothers.

CHAPTER XI

THE LAW OF REVERENCE AND REGARD

This lesson concerns a principle that has received comparatively little special treatment by Christian teachers. The reason may be that it is not stated in the Gospels in so many words. Yet just as soon as we once consider it, we see how fundamental it is in Jesus' thought and what wide and vital meaning it has to-day. President King of Oberlin has declared that "the principle of reverence for personality is the ruling principle in ethics and in religion," and that it is "the characteristic that most clearly distinguishes the modern world from the ancient." (See also Rall, *A Working Faith*, pp. 167ff.)

In studying the biblical passages note that this is not the surface suggestion or the lesson usually drawn from them, yet see how it lights up their meaning. Such a study will freshen up these passages and give them new value.

Get the fundamental principle of the lesson clearly before the class. It follows simply and directly from the two great principles of Fatherhood and sonship. Just as soon as a man knows himself as the son of such a Father all manhood becomes different to him. Not even the humblest or meanest man can ever be a mere tool any more, a mere servant to do work, a mere "hand" in factory or on farm, or a mere man in the ranks to fight.

There is so much material here that the teacher will need to plan carefully to bring out the important facts and yet avoid confusion. The following order might be used:

1. Note God's reverence for man, how he has made and trained the race, how he calls men, what he offers men.

2. Note the Old Testament message as seen in prophet and psalmist, how the psalmist speaks of man as a little lower than God, how the prophets scourge those, whether kings or nobles or rich men, who oppress even the humblest.

3. Consider Jesus' reverence for personality, how he shows it to the most sinful as well as the most humble, and how his reverence and faith stir the highest in men.

4. Now consider the practical meaning of this truth for us, and first of all how men should reverence themselves. Here is a fine lesson in temperance.

5. Then note some of the many applications of this in the social relations of men, indeed, in all the relations of life. Aside from those mentioned in the lesson discussion, find other instances where this law of reverence is working changes in social and industrial life. Is there any place in your community where it is being violated, or where it might be better observed? How can this fundamental law of reverence and regard for personality be inculcated among men in the relations of everyday life?

Notes and Comments

THE PRINCIPLE IN EDUCATION.—Consider this principle of reverence for personality in the field of education and reform. At the heart of modern education is this reverence for the child. Men used to put first the curriculum, the subjects to be taught; now we put the child in the midst. We must first study the child, what he is, how he grows, what he needs. We must make our work fit the child, not the child fit our work; and that is as true of the Sunday school as anywhere.

PENAL REFORM AND ITS USE OF THE RULE.—Recent years have seen great advances in the treatment of the juvenile delinquent and the adult criminal. In every such case we shall find that Jesus' principle of reverence and regard has been used. What Judge Lindsey does in Denver is to trust the boys on the one side, and to win their trust on the other. It is a man-to-man treatment, in which they themselves are respected and in which they have a fair chance. Deeply interesting has been the work of Warden Tynan of the State Penitentiary of Colorado. He has employed hundreds of his men in making magnificent roads throughout the state. Scores of these men may be found in camp many miles from the prison, and the only gun in the camp will be in the hands of a convict standing guard against possible marauders from

without. How has he done it? By giving a man's chance to every man that has showed promise that he would use it. Warden Osborne's position at Sing Sing was the same. He treated his prisoners as if they were still men, giving them a man's chance even to the matter of self-government in prison discipline. The week that he spent among them, unknown to them except as a fellow inmate, sharing their cell, their toil, their fare, made them feel that here was one who wanted to know them as brother men and treated them as such. The response was notable. No more stirring tribute to the method of Jesus has been given than the tale of that convict who "made his get-away" at the time when Warden Osborne was dislodged by his foes, but who came back voluntarily and unattended to take his full sentence with extra penalty, because he saw that he was doing a harm to Warden Osborne. And not less striking is the fact that it was a group of ex-convicts who persuaded him to return.

In Modern Charity.—Modern charity uses the same principle. The giving which humiliates, which lessens self-regard, or self-reliance, is wrong giving. Our Sunday schools have sometimes made this mistake in connection with a "giving Christmas," by sending groups of children to deliver baskets here and there. Such a method may be interesting to the children, but what if it humiliates those who receive? We must give help in such a way as to build up courage and self-respect, to set men upon their feet instead of confirming them in their dependence upon others.

The Blight of Scorn.—The spirit of scorn and contempt not only wrongs him who must bear it, but blights him who cherishes it as well. Nothing will more surely destroy the fine fiber of a man's character. And nothing will work deeper harm in a nation than for one class in that nation to feel the spirit of scorn or contempt for another class whether because of race or color or position. Slavery injures the master as truly as the slave. No part of our people can live the true and full life so long as any other part, negro, foreigner, poor, is shut out of the privileges of life. We must rise together or we shall all stay down.

CHAPTER XII

THE LAW OF GRACE AND GOOD WILL

THERE are certain Christian ideas with which we have grown so familiar that we do not sense their full meaning or realize how much it meant to bring them into the world. That is true of this thought of grace and good will, which is the Christian doctrine of love. It is the task of the teacher to find some new way of approach that will freshen up the thought and bring out its rich content.

The lesson discussion suggests such a way of approach. It points out three stages in the thought of God: mere power, indifferent to man; bare justice, giving to each only what he has earned; and rising above both of these, Jesus' great thought of the God who is all mercy and good will. Show now the three corresponding stages in man's thought of his relation to men.

Our great task is to make our life with men fit in with our thought of God. If grace is the law of God's heart, it must be the law of our life; that is the truth which this lesson makes clear. God's true being is the law for our being. A simple plan of teaching the lesson is the following:

1. Show the relation, as suggested above, of a man's thought of God and his conception of his own life, giving illustrations or calling for them.

2. Show how Jesus brings this out in Matthew 5. 43-48. These verses and those preceding do not give new rules, but simply illustrate how men should let God's spirit of grace be their ruling spirit.

3. Show how this spirit of grace will manifest itself as good will to men. Use Jesus' life as illustration.

4. The spirit of good will as unlimited and unconquerable. It is not limited to men of our kind or class or circle, any

more than God's grace is. It cannot be overcome by the way men behave toward us any more than God's good will toward us is limited by our disobedience, ingratitude, or sin.

5. Consider how inconsistent and wicked it is to expect grace from God and to refuse this law of grace in our relations to our neighbor. Here use Jesus' parable of the unmerciful servant.

6. Consider what is demanded of us by this law of grace in the matter of forgiveness. (1) We cannot always forgive our brother in the fullest sense of that word, that is, establish the mutual relation of good will and trust between us. It takes two to do that in the case of man and man, as it does in the case of man and God. (2) The spirit of forgiveness, the longing for our brother, must always be present. What he does, or will not do, must not change our spirit. (3) There must be a positive spirit of reconciliation, the spirit which leaves the sacrifice at the altar and goes out to seek the brother, just as God goes out to seek us.

Notes and Comments

What We Can Do.—Forgiveness takes two, for in its full sense it means to reestablish a relation that has been broken by sin or wrong. God cannot reestablish that relation until we come with penitence and desire. We cannot restore friendship with our enemy unless he so desire. But the spirit of forgiveness we can always show, and the earnest desire for reconciliation.

A Mark of Strength.—"To forgive a fault is nobler than to be faultless. The duty is to forgive the penitent for his own sake, the impenitent for our own. The human soul is never so strong as when it foregoes revenge and dares to forgive an injury."

A Great Faith.—The simplicity of the words of Jesus sometimes hides their profound meaning. What a world revolution it will make when men once grasp that simple message of Jesus concerning love and good will! Love, Jesus teaches, is the heart of God and the throne that rules the world; and love is the life of man and the only true life.

"I say to thee, do thou repeat,
To the first man thou mayest meet
In field or lane or open street,
That he, and we, and all men move
Under a canopy of love
As broad as the blue sky above.

"And ere thou leave him, say thou this
Yet one word more, 'They only miss
The winning of that final bliss
Who will not count it true that love,
Blessing, not cursing, rules above,
And that in it we all live and move.'"

Christian Hospitality.—One application that Jesus made of this law of good will is still as pertinent as ever. Then, as now, the beautiful name of hospitality was joined to what was a mere matter of exchange. If a man is to be really blessed, to know the real joy of hospitality, says Jesus, he must try a different plan. Let him not ask his friends or relatives, but the poor and crippled and blind. These cannot pay you back, "and thou shalt be blessed" (Luke 14. 12-14). What if we should use our homes for one year in this manner, not anxiously compiling lists and keeping records of social obligations to be paid off, but finding in our home a fine God-given chance for showing good will? And what if we should tell our friends that we were not going to follow our previous Christmas custom? And what if we should forget all about those who had "remembered us," and simply plan to give where men had need and where we could serve? Think what a nation-wide Christmas like that would mean!

CHAPTER XIII

THE LAW OF SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

In this chapter the final meaning of the law of brotherhood comes to expression. In the four chapters closing with the present we have been mounting step by step. Let us trace these steps again by way of introduction.

(1) All men are sons of God, my brothers, and I must act toward them in the spirit of the Father. Fatherhood gives the rule of brotherhood.

(2) That means a spirit of reverence toward every man as a child of God.

(3) That means a spirit of grace seen as unconquerable good will toward all, and as the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

(4) That brings us to the present lesson: the final expression of brotherhood is the giving of life for others.

The main difficulty in teaching this lesson comes from our very familiarity with the idea of service. We need to show what Jesus did by bringing in this ideal, and what its place is in his religion.

For the first point, bring out the sharp contrast of the pagan ideal of life and the Christian in this respect. On one side is the ideal of getting and ruling, on the other that of giving and serving. Show this in Jesus' teaching and illustrate it from the lesson discussion.

As regards the second point, note that the average man is still far from grasping Jesus' teaching. It is not a question of some service, but a matter of the fundamental rule of a man's whole life. This is his real life, the giving of himself for others. Service is not an incident, but the standpoint from which he is to regard his whole life. It is in this that Jesus wrought that "reversal of values" which stirred the wrath of Nietzsche. The highest ideal of Jesus' day was the Stoic

ideal, that of the wise man, strong, calm, poised, sufficient to himself in face of good or ill. But life was for Jesus not the calm of a philosopher's repose. It was a great venture, a venture of faith in which men daringly rested in the mercy of God, a venture of love in which men lost themselves in service in the life of their fellow men. Christianity is no religion of weaklings. Its ideal is one of strength. But its strong man is neither the wise man of the Stoics, dwelling aloft and alone; nor the superman of Nietzsche, holding others down while he climbs his pedestal. He is the man who is strong enough not only to mount but to lift up others with him.

The following order of treatment might be used in bringing out this truth.

1. Consider this principle of self-giving, or self-dedication to others, as that which Jesus definitely chose for himself, and show how his life from its beginning to his death illustrates this.

2. Show how this ideal of Jesus has influenced the thought and life of the world. It is a long story, the story of innumerable charities and philanthropies and reforms. It is a still longer story of the quiet ministry of humble and forgotten folks in all the common relations which make up our real life. There can be no greater tribute to the kingship of Jesus than the prevalence of the spirit of service to-day. It is not the church alone that shows this, but every department of modern life.

3. Make plain by illustration what this life of service means to-day for men individually, for the church, for the state.

4. Religion has always meant some kind of service, but at first it was always a service done to God or to the gods by way of sacrifice, ritual, etc. Note the significance of the fact with Jesus that service of God means serving men.

5. Consider the idea of sacrifice, pagan and Christian; on the one side the idea of suffering, on the other that of self-dedication to a high end; on the one side the way of loss, on the other the way of life.

6. Emphasize the need for even more of the spirit of service and sacrifice than has yet existed. We need a leadership

which will both illustrate and declare this law of Jesus. Day by day the number is growing of the men of wealth and power and position who cannot rest because of their brothers' need, and who take "service to others" as their guiding principle.

Notes and Comments

THE TOMB OF CHINESE GORDON.—In Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, the noble church where so many noble dead are buried, there is a tomb that bears these words:

> To Major-General Charles George Gordon: Who at all times and everywhere gave his strength to the weak, his substance to the poor, his sympathy to the suffering, and his heart to God. He saved an empire by his warlike genius, he ruled vast provinces with justice, wisdom, and power, and lastly, obedient to his sovereign's command, he died in the heroic attempt to save men, women, and children from imminent and deadly peril. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

HOW IT WORKS IN LIFE.—Every man has before him living examples of Jesus' great law of saving and losing. There is the man whose whole life has been a quest for gain, and who has held tight to all that ever came his way. Some men envy him, but not those who know. His soul has grown steadily smaller with the years. He does not know the fine joy of giving, the pure friendship of all kinds of people who care for you and not for what you have, and the high fellowship with God that comes to those who have studied God's great purposes and give life and substance to further God's great ends. And there is the man, rich perhaps, perhaps of humble means, who caught early the secret of Christ. The passing years have brought him growing treasures of love and friendship. He has practiced sympathy with all kinds of men, near and far, and he has been gaining that fine culture of the human soul which cleverness or knowledge can never give. He has studied missions and reforms and the large questions of industry and his nation's life, so that he might better give himself and his money. And with every gift of time or wealth he himself has grown the richer.

CHAPTER XIV

THE LAW OF BROTHERHOOD AND THE NATIONS

In a year of war and in the midst of political strife this lesson demands care in the teaching. At the same time it is of the highest importance that we apply the teachings of Jesus in these very fields. If Jesus be really Lord and Master for us, then he must be Lord of all life and teacher in all things.

Avoid the mistake of wresting Jesus' words to meanings and uses which were not intended. "Peace I leave with you" is not a text to settle disputes about preparedness. "I came not to bring peace, but a sword," clearly indicates that the highest is not to come without conflict, but it does not settle the question of a larger navy.

In discussing such subjects it is easy to criticize other nations, especially in relation to the great war. It is far more important for us to see our own needs. Of such high patriotism, the prophets of Israel give us a good example. They love Israel too much not to condemn her sins, and they set their ideal of her so high that they could not be content with her failures.

The general purpose of the teaching should be to give a higher ideal for our own land, a truer conception of the patriotism that is demanded to-day, and a larger vision of the part that America has to play among the nations of the earth in bringing in a new reign of righteousness and peace.

In the plan of teaching, meet first the objection that we cannot take the principles of Jesus and apply them to the duties of nations. Note that this objection has been made in turn as we have tried to apply the same principles to business, to problems of labor and capital, and to politics. If the God who made this world is good will, as Jesus taught, then love is the power that underlies all life and being, and no life on this earth can claim another law.

The Bible references might be taken next, but the attention of the class should be called to the whole teaching about Fatherhood and brotherhood as given so far in the course.

Then take up in order the new nationalism and the new internationalism as suggested in the lesson discussion.

The General Conference *Daily Christian Advocate* for May 9, 1916, gives a telling illustration of what Christian patriotism should not be in a speech of John G. Woolley. He mentions a certain district whose congressman was an associate of Lorimer in the work of political corruption. The district is a center of Methodist culture and piety, but when this man came before the voters at the primaries, of twenty-five thousand registered voters only nine hundred came to the polls. The nine hundred were not the church people, and the candidate was approved.

Notes and Comments

As to the Strangers within Our Gates.—The new nationalism will demand a different treatment for the foreigners in our midst. Here is a great test for our own land, as well as a great opportunity indirectly to influence and serve other lands. For there is a constant travel and interchange of ideas between these people and the lands from which they came. Nor need we discourage this, for we can make it a great highway along which American democratic and Protestant ideals may travel to other shores. What now are we doing to put these ideals into the life of these folks in our midst? A great deal, especially through our public schools, but as yet not nearly enough. The church has not done enough, and city and state and national government have not done enough. Some months ago there was a strike in an Eastern city with riot and bloodshed. Investigation discovered certain conditions. Here was an industrial suburb of nearly ten thousand people, mostly foreigners. Only two or three hundred voted at elections. There was no night school to teach these men English. There were but nine students in the high school. It was reported that this community had not one church, Protestant or Catholic, in its midst, though there were nineteen saloons to help send forth a drink-crazed mob.

Two Movements.—Two movements may be taken to illustrate this new international mind. The first is the League to Enforce Peace. It is the purpose of this League at the close of the present war to unite the nations in a positive alliance that shall oppose itself to all war, and restrain any nation that goes to war by itself. The second is the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship through the Churches, concerning which information may be secured by writing to 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York. Its purpose is to promote international justice and to further good will and friendship among the peoples, through the churches of all lands. It began in a conference held in Constance, Germany, upon the very eve of the war. The two movements suggest two lines along which the nations must work if a lasting peace is to be secured. Such a peace must rest on two pillars. One is that of justice, and for this the governments must work together, transcending the old pure nationalism, which was selfish. The other pillar is good will, and here the churches and all other spiritual forces have their great task.

Diplomacy and the Golden Rule.—Whatever the failure of the United States may have been in the past, her later years have shown an honest desire to follow the principle laid down by one of her greatest Secretaries of State, John Hay, namely, to follow the Golden Rule in the treatment of other nations. We have sent our teachers and other leaders to train the Filipinos, and to prepare them for ultimate independence. We have given Cuba her independence when it would have been easy to find a pretext for retaining possession. In an earlier crisis we stood for the integrity of China when her partition seemed imminent, and sent back to her the millions of indemnity which did not seem to us our just due.

CHAPTER XV

THE DISCIPLE AND THE WORLD

HERE is a lesson which demands wisdom of the teacher, but gives an opportunity to bring out some important and neglected truths. First of all let us make sure that our spirit here is that of Jesus. There is enough class hatred and prejudice; let us not add to it. There is not only jealousy of the rich by the poor, but the well-to-do and employing classes have often little understanding of what the social unrest among the masses means. We need first of all the brotherhood and deep humanity of Jesus.

There is a broader and a narrow aspect of this lesson. Do not limit the discussion to the narrower part, the question of wealth. The broad question is this: What shall be my attitude toward this world of natural things, the world about us which most men fear and love at the same time?

First bring out clearly Jesus' view of the world as God's world. It was not merely that he thought of it as having been made by God, but he knew his Father's presence in it and that his Father's power ruled it. This means an attitude of confidence and a spirit of peace, if men really believe it. And this is what makes anxiety a sin, since it shows a lack of real trust in God.

There is room, then, with Jesus for a simple, wholesome enjoyment of the goods and pleasures of life. There are still some folks who look with suspicion upon anyone who is having a good time, and especially upon the recreations of young people; but wise teachers know that play is a part of education, and that wholesome play is part of a normal life for old as well as young.

The most important point in this lesson, however, is to see clearly what Jesus' supreme interest was. The life of men with God was his great concern. His words about wealth

are not from envy of the rich, or because these earthly things seem evil in themselves. He judged everything by its effect on this highest interest. He saw that the highest life was injured and destroyed by the eager strife for wealth, by men's fears concerning earthly goods, and by the possession of riches.

If there is time, take up a final practical question: How can we use these gifts of earth to minister to the highest in ourselves and in others?

Notes and Comments

THE QUESTION OF AMUSEMENTS.—The question of amusements is one rarely discussed with reference to the fundamental principles at issue. Wholesale denunciation is of no value, and misrepresentation of others does only harm. It is of little value, too, to attempt to settle such questions by laying down rules. The whole method of Jesus, as we have seen, was to give men a new spirit and have them live it out. But we need to see clearly certain truths and be guided by them.

(1) Play is a normal part of man's nature. Old need it as well as young, but it is especially important for the young as being a part of their education. It is as necessary, therefore, for us to provide wholesome play as to guard against unwholesome.

(2) True amusement will be recreation, re-creation; it will build up.

(3) Some amusements are bad in themselves. John Wesley's mother laid down a sound principle when she bade him as a young man avoid those amusements which lessened his relish for the highest and best.

(4) Any amusement is bad if taken to excess or out of its place. That is perhaps our greatest danger in this matter to-day. Wealth has increased, and leisure as well, but instead of making time and money serve high ends, we have become absorbed in the effort to have a good time. The root is selfishness; and the end is decay and death.

CHAPTER XVI

STEWARDSHIP AND LIFE

HERE is an old theme in attractive form and with great possibilities of usefulness. Plan to make it count, not only in the teaching, but for the practice of your class and of the church.

The last lesson had to do with a man's thought about the world: this has to do with his work in the world. Here are two big propositions that underlie the whole lesson: the Kingdom is God's great aim in the world; cooperation with God for the Kingdom is our great work in the world.

The lesson discussion does not take up the Scripture references in detail. Read them over carefully; do not take up minute points, but get their meaning for this present lesson.

The lesson falls naturally into two parts, and this division may be used in your scheme of teaching.

1. Jesus' teaching about life as a stewardship, or trust. (1) All life comes from God. There is no room for pride as if we were "self-made." (2) All life belongs to God, ten tenths of our income, seven sevenths of our days, our business and not simply a part of its proceeds. (3) All life is to be used for God, and this, in Jesus' teaching, always means *used for men.* The parable of the talents brings out sharply this responsibility. The story of the unrighteous steward shows that wisdom and thought are necessary, as well as good intentions. Note that there are several passages which emphasize truth as a trust, and confession and proclamation as a duty.

2. Practical applications. Jesus gives few of these. About the only way to give in his day was to the temple and to the poor. Think how many there are in our own day. We must, therefore, not limit ourselves to the illustrations in the Gospels, but apply the principles of Jesus to our rich modern life. We shall find that they are just what we need.

Only we must apply them far more broadly than we have done. The broad outline of these applications is given in the lesson discussion. Follow the outline, but find your own illustrations.

The best result of this lesson will be if you can get the members of your class for themselves to adopt a stewardship program. Ask them individually to decide and to write down: what proportion of their income they will give; what definite tasks they will take up in the church; what lines of service in the community; what change, if any, they may need to make in their business if God is to be a full partner. This should be only for a man's own eye.

Notes and Comments

Making Money for God.—Alpheus Hardy was a merchant prince who made giving a part of his business. How it came about he once told to a friend as follows: "I wanted to go to college and become a minister. My health broke down, and in spite of my determined hope of being able to go on, at last the truth was forced upon me that I could not.

"When the fact at last became certain to me one morning—alone in my room—my distress was so great that I threw myself flat on the floor. The voiceless cry of my soul was, 'O God, I cannot be thy minister.' Then there came to me as I lay a vision, a new hope, a perception that I could serve God in business with the same devotion as in preaching, and that to make money for God might be my sacred calling.

"From that time I have felt myself as much appointed and ordained to make money for God as if I had been permitted to carry out my own plan and been ordained to preach the gospel. I am God's man, and the ministry to which God has called me is to make and administer money for him, and I consider myself responsible to discharge this ministry and to give account of it to him."

The Jew as a Giver.—The men of the Christian Church to-day give nowhere near the amount that the pious Jew of old did. Two tithes were referred to in the Old Testament law, coming from different codes, but both taken as valid by the strict Jew (Numbers 18. 20-32; Deuteronomy 14. 22-26).

Deuteronomy 14. 28, 29 provided for still another tithe to be given every third year, in which year the Jew thus gave a third of his income. In addition to all this there were very large freewill offerings.

A Rich Man on Wealth.—"Great wealth is not to be desired, and in my experience of life it is generally more of a curse than a blessing to the families who possess it. Six of my children are of an age to understand how my action affects them, and they all entirely approve." This was said by George Cadbury, famous maker of chocolate in England, after giving the bulk of his property outside his business for a philanthropic trust.

The Duty of Simplicity.—Simple living and moderate spending upon oneself and family is one of the ways in which men of means can serve their community. Extravagance and display cause envy and bitterness, provoke others to spend beyond their means, and are a violation of our trust from God. Above all should there be simplicity of dress within the Christian Church.

CHAPTER XVII

THE KINGDOM AS A GIFT AND A GOOD

It is a common custom of men to take out of the sayings of Jesus that which supports their own views or is in agreement with them, or else to read into his words their own ideas. And this is done with no intention of violence or dishonesty. We shall need special care at this point in the lessons that follow on the Kingdom.

As we draw near the end of the course it is important to bring out again and again the fact that the teachings of Jesus have one common source. They do not hang together because he had a system of doctrine and taught this systematically. Their common source is rather in his faith. It is his thought of God and his life as Son with the Father from which all springs.

In this first lesson on the Kingdom go back to Jesus' teaching about God and show how the Kingdom hope roots in this, how his thought of God's love and God's power gives him the assurance that the Kingdom will come.

At the beginning of the lesson bring out clearly the idea of the Kingdom as meaning kingship, or rule. In the Aramaic which Jesus spoke, as in the Greek, the word translated kingdom may mean either the realm or the rule. The Jews thought primarily of a realm, a political kingdom which should be theirs. Jesus thinks primarily of a rule, and secondarily of the place or the people over whom this rule was to be.

It will add to the interest to test this idea by reading in class various passages that speak of the Kingdom and substituting the word "rule" or "kingship." The question is not whether this is the only meaning, but whether this is the fundamental meaning with Jesus.

The rule of God is the highest good of men—that idea

underlies this lesson. Show how this idea depends upon Jesus' conception of God. If God is such a God as Jesus portrayed, his only wish for us is our highest good, and then his rule will be the supreme blessing.

This will of God Jesus taught his disciples to set first in their asking and their seeking. Do we feel that way? Is that the word that represents our supreme desire for the world, for our loved ones, for ourselves?

Notes and Comments

As to the Parable of the Treasure.—Is it fair for a man who has found a treasure in a field, to purchase that field without betraying this fact to the owner, as was evidently the case in the parable of the treasure? Jesus does not consider this question at all himself. As in the case of the unrighteous steward, the character of the man does not enter in. Jesus has just one point that he wishes to bring out here, the supreme value of the Kingdom, beside which all other things may well be sacrificed.

The Dominant Note Religious.—The dominant note in Jesus' message of the Kingdom is the religious note, and this needs reemphasis in our day. We shall turn in the next chapter to the thought of the Kingdom as ethical, as a task for men. That we must not lose. But we need an access of that joyous confidence of Jesus which rested not upon man's deed, but upon God's love and power. The fight for righteousness and peace will not last long, the courage and devotion will not long endure, unless we realize that a power greater than we is engaged, that the stars in their courses are fighting against Sisera. Such a faith should not lead to idleness, but should be a mighty spur to action. So it was with Jesus. So it was with Luther, as his great battle hymn shows.

Other Meanings.—Our study of the Kingdom of God will show other meanings besides that which we have considered in this chapter. In some passages it seems to mean the company of the sons of the Kingdom, and in others the place or state of that final life to which God is to bring his own. But for the most part it remains true, that the Kingdom is the rule of God, which as such is the highest good of man.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE KINGDOM AS A TASK

The teaching of Jesus as contained in this lesson is simple. Underlying it, however, is a principle of the utmost importance in the Christian religion, and that should be made clear to the class. To do this is the main purpose of this lesson. The principle is that of the relation of the moral and the religious in the teaching of Jesus. It may be stated thus: every gift of God is a task, every task of God is a gift. Some people think of the Kingdom only as a gift; we are to pray for it and wait for it and God some time will give it. For some people the Kingdom is simply a task; we are to make the world better, we are to bring in the reign of righteousness and peace. Each side is true in what it states, but wrong in what it omits.

A simple plan of teaching would be to consider in order the teaching, the principle, the application.

As to the teaching, review briefly our study of the Kingdom as a gift. Now note the other words of Jesus. They are contained in our Scripture references, in the passages cited in the lesson discussion, and in other sayings of Jesus which the class may recall. Here it is clear that the Kingdom is not simply something for which we are quietly to wait, but something to be sought and seized, something for which we are to deny ourselves, something which belongs to those who serve and obey and live. This does not mean that it is to be earned, as the Jews thought. It is all God's grace, but the gift of God carries a task, demands a surrender, involves a life.

Now make plain the principle, what God gives to men is life, and life is something which we possess only as we live it. Take one after the other the things that make up life: freedom, truth, love, righteousness, faith. These belong to men

only as they give themselves to them, as they act upon them. God will give his Kingdom when we are ready to live his Kingdom; his giving and our living must go hand in hand.

The practical applications of this are, first of all, individual. On one side our Christian life and experience are the gift of God. On this side it is our duty to trust God and leave it to him. Too many people here make the mistake of insisting that God shall give his gifts in a particular manner, with just this feeling and that experience. That belongs to him. It is not our business to be trying to get experiences; it is our duty to trust him utterly and to leave it with him. On the other side the Christian life is our task. We are to trust God to give the life, but we must then go ahead to live the life just so far as he gives it. That is our special business, and we must not fail there. Is the rule of God working out in our life?

In the next chapter we shall take up some of the social applications and meanings of this rule of God. To-day as never before Christian men are asking, "What does the rule of God mean in business, in government, in the life of the nations? Can we have a Christian world, and what kind of a world will that be?" Let us think on these questions.

Notes and Comments

Sanctification as God's Gift and Man's Task.—The doctrine of sanctification is one of the places where men have often separated the task from the gift. Paul is the great New Testament teacher on this theme, and he shows plainly how the two belong together. It is God who makes men holy through the gifts of his Spirit, and yet this becoming holy (or, better stated, becoming Christlike) is man's task also. The Spirit of God is a gift to be received and a life to be lived. No man can have this gift except as he lives this life. God's saving of man is moral and spiritual, not mechanical. It is not something that he does to us, but with us. "Work out your own salvation, . . . for it is God that worketh in you" (Philippians 2. 12). Paul's use of the word "walk" is interesting. The word indicates activity. Paul uses it in connection with the Holy Spirit, with love, with Christ. In

every case we have a gift of God which means duty and activity for men. We are to "walk in newness of life," "in the Spirit," "in love," "in Christ Jesus the Lord" (Rom. 6. 4; Gal. 5. 16; Eph. 5. 2; Col. 2. 6). There is no part of the Christian life which is not at the same time a gift to be received and a work to be done.

THE RULE OF GOD IN A MAN'S LIFE.—The biggest question that can face any Christian man is to find out what the rule of God means for his life, and then to live it out. Every day should begin with the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," with the deep sense of our dependence upon God and with the confidence that God will give. But side by side with this must go the other prayer, "Thy will be done." What does this kingdom mean for my home? What does God's rule mean in my business? Is the way in which I spend my money a part of the kingdom of God? Does his rule shape my plans?

CHAPTER XIX

THE KINGDOM AS INWARD AND OUTWARD

THERE is danger that this idea of the Kingdom may become confusing to our classes as we discuss these various aspects. It may be well, therefore, by way of introduction to make clear certain points:

(1) Go back to the simple definition with which we began —the Kingdom of God means the rule of God. In all our discussions it is well to turn back to this again and again.

(2) Show how rich this idea was for Jesus. For him God was the one great reality and the one great good. The rule of God therefore meant everything for him. In that word he summed up all that he asked of men now, all that he hoped of God for the future. We must not wonder then at the many things that he said about it.

(3) In the brief review, show how the various aspects of the Kingdom that we have studied so far all come out of this great thought of the rule of God. It is something that God is to give, for which we are to pray and hope. It is the greatest good that can come to us; it means nothing less than God himself in us and in his world, and that includes forgiveness, and freedom, and life. But it is also a task for us, a rule from within and not from without, and so a life for us to live out and a work to do.

This prepares us for our present lesson. We come here to one of the subjects of controversy which needs clear thinking and an honest desire to understand others. Begin by stating in extreme form the opposing positions, on the one side the emphasis upon the "spiritual," on the other the demand for the social.

Make clear first of all that the Kingdom with Jesus is a spiritual fact. Consider the things which he emphasizes as discussed in the lesson: righteousness, humility, love, the spirit of a child. Quite as significant is the silence of Jesus,

the matters of which he did not speak. He did not speak of state and politics, of triumph of arms, of Roman rule. This is the more significant because they were uppermost in the minds of his countrymen.

Now consider the second group of Scripture passages and what they imply. Bring out the different lines which lead to the same conclusion:

(1) Jesus' thought of God demands that his rule shall some time be over all things.

(2) When we consider the kind of "spiritual" for which Jesus stood, it points the same way. It is a spirit that must work out in love and service, and above all in righteousness.

(3) Finally, when we see the way in which that spirit worked even while Jesus was here upon earth, we note how it began immediately to bind men together. The end can be nothing less than a whole humanity redeemed and bound together in one family, living under the laws of good will and righteousness not only in family and church, but also in business and state.

Find time, if possible, for a little study of the meaning of social service. Write to the Methodist Federation for Social Service or to the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, 105 East 22d Street, New York. Get a copy of the great declaration of social principles made by the Methodist Episcopal Church in its last General Conference at Saratoga Springs (Discipline, ¶ 586). The last is perhaps the strongest and finest declaration of social principles and ideals ever set forth by any church. Ask the class these questions: Should not the spirit of Christ rule all the life of all men? Should not we as Christian men work definitely and avowedly to have that will done in our community, in our industry, in our nation, and among the nations? And finally, ask definitely what there is in your community, in its recreation, in its business, in its politics, in matters of health and cleanliness, in which the will of Christ is not being done? What, then, can your class do?

Notes and Comments

THE KINGDOM IS LARGER THAN THE CHURCH.—Roman Ca-

tholicism very early identified the Kingdom of God with the idea of the church, and this idea has not been without influence in Protestantism (see hymn 208, Methodist Hymnal, written by the elder Timothy Dwight, president of Yale). There is an element of truth here, for the first and truest manifestation of the Kingdom will be the fellowship of those who love God and serve men. There are, however, two dangers here. The first is that men will think of the visible church, the organization with its officials, rather than the fellowship of disciples. The second is that men will fail to see the rule of God that lies without the church as such. Wherever God's will is being done, there is his rule. Wherever there is truth and right, wherever there is love and service, there is his kingdom. Where citizens join together to secure better government, there is the rule of God. Where laboring men rise above mere individual interests, and seek by united effort to check child labor and long hours for women, or to secure better conditions and fairer wages, there the Kingdom of God is being furthered. The same is true in non-Christian lands where even the name of Jesus may not be known. So far as men know truth and love and righteousness in those lands, so far God's rule is present, and so far there is preparation for the complete rule of God as set forth in the Spirit of Christ.

CHAPTER XX

THE KINGDOM AS PRESENT AND FUTURE

This chapter is one that gives opportunity for differences of opinion and may lead to controversy. It will be well to begin with the words of Jesus so far as they bear on this. Ask the class to consider these words carefully, and to draw conclusions only when all have been studied.

Take up first the passages which speak of the Kingdom as that which is to come. That the Kingdom is at hand means not that it is here, but that it is very near.

Now consider the passages which imply that the Kingdom is already present. These are of very deep interest. Some of them, like Luke 10. 18, suggest that it came to Jesus as a kind of joyful surprise to realize that the beginnings of the Kingdom were already here. How he rejoices and thanks his Father when he realizes how the poor and sinful are pressing into the Kingdom! (Matthew 11. 25.)

The solution to our question, then, is that the Kingdom is both present and to come. It is true that only the beginnings are here now. It is like the tiny mustard seed, but it shall in due time become the great tree.

Every question concerning the Kingdom leads back to the underlying question, What do we mean by the Kingdom? Sometimes it may be advantageous to make a brief review in the middle of the lesson discussion, instead of at the beginning, where it may be formal and uninteresting. Do not call it a review, and do not go over all the lessons on the Kingdom, but recall the discussions about the nature of the Kingdom. It is the rule of God, God's kingship. Yes, but what kind of a rule, within or without, political or spiritual? Is it an institution, or is it a life in men? We have answered: the rule of God is the will of God being done in men. It

means a new spirit ("God is spirit") dwelling in men, and working out from within till it rules all the life of the earth.

From this standpoint the question of present and future is answered. Living things do not come all at once; they grow. We say of them, "They are here"; but we can also say, "They are yet to come." The boy is here, but the man is yet to come. Especially is this true of the spiritual. The choice of a moment makes a man a Christian, but it takes the years to make him really a Christ-man. That is what Paul means when he says, "I count not myself yet to have laid hold." The Kingdom of God in the world is not different from God's kingdom in a man. If this last is a moral and spiritual life, then the first must be such also.

The question of the millennium is a controversial question that is better kept in the minor place where it belongs. Settle once for all the fact that the Kingdom of God is moral and spiritual, and it follows that it must come in moral and spiritual ways. Of course the Kingdom of God will not be present until our business and politics are under God's rule as well as our prayer meetings, but in these also the rule must come by the working of moral and spiritual forces.

CHAPTER XXI

THE FORMS AND INSTITUTIONS OF RELIGION

THE full title of this chapter might be, "The Place of Forms and Institutions in a Religion of the Spirit." In a lesson like this, which takes up fundamental questions, it is especially important to make clear the real subject, as well as the outline of the treatment.

Here is the problem to be treated in this lesson: The religion of Jesus is a pure religion of the spirit; what, then, is the place of form and institution in it? Bring out clearly and in order the following points:

1. Jesus taught a religion of the spirit. Ask the class to give you definitions of religion according to Jesus. As they speak of love and faith and obedience and good will and righteousness, point out that these all refer to the inner spirit of man, and not to doctrines or ritual or the relation to the church.

2. Note, on the other hand, that all life must have forms in which to express itself. Especially is that true of a social religion like Christianity, which brings men together for worship and fellowship and work.

3. Consider the attitude of Jesus toward forms in his own day. (1) Commonly he was indifferent to them; his disciples did not fast nor observe the many washings nor keep the Sabbath rules. (2) Sometimes he was severely critical. Note the reference in the discussion to the criticism of the Pharisees, and the passage in the Sermon on the Mount as referred to in the Notes and Comments. Compare Jesus with the prophets here. (3) And yet Jesus had regard for both institutions and forms, for synagogue, for temple, for Sabbath, for John's baptism, for the passover.

4. What is the Christian position in regard to institutions and forms? They are not the substance of religion, but the

servants of religion. When they take the first place they become a danger and have been a source of divisions in Christianity.

The second part of the lesson has to do with various Christian forms and institutions. On all these points there has been endless dispute in the past. The purpose of the lesson is not to encourage such dispute. If there are differences of opinion on the various matters considered, that will do no harm. The important point is to show that there is a position which lifts us above such differences. If these forms are the essence of the Christian religion, then it is of vital importance, for example, that the form of baptism should be just one way and the form of church organization after the one correct pattern. If, as we hold, these are means and not ends, then the one important thing to ask is, do they express the life of the spirit and minister to it? Do they help religion or hinder it?

Notes and Comments

As to Fasting.—As regards fasting itself, there is no place where Jesus enjoins it. In Matthew 6. 17 he simply tells men how to fast if they will. His disciples he defends for not fasting (Mark 2. 19). Two other references to fasting found in the Authorized Version (Matt. 17. 21 and Mark 9. 29), in which fasting and prayer are joined together, do not occur in the earliest manuscripts. Both are therefore omitted from the Revised Version.

The Purpose of Sabbath, Sunday, and Lord's Day.—Jesus' position, that the welfare of man is the purpose and end of the Jewish Sabbath, applies also to the Christian Lord's Day. Exodus 23. 12 is held by scholars to be the oldest form in which the Sabbath law is given in the Old Testament. It is significant that the thought suggested here is not of something given to God or done for God, but of an institution that is for man's welfare and for that of his beasts: "That thine ox and thine ass may have rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the sojourner, may be refreshed." The same broad humanitarian motive appears in the law as given in Deuteronomy 5. 12-15. In modern legislation by the state we

have come back to this principle. So far as the state is concerned, Sunday legislation is not to assert or defend one religious view against another; it is to defend the right of men to physical rest and to that leisure which is needed for the highest life of the individual and the home. The thoughtlessness and greed of men make such legislation especially important to-day. All this, however, does not express the principal meaning of the Christian day, the Lord's Day. The mark of the Jewish Sabbath was absence of labor, the Lord's Day had its beginning in the need for worship and Christian fellowship. The test of the day is the way in which it builds up this higher life. That is far more than mere abstinence from labor.

The Use of Forms in Worship.—The question of forms of worship has often been hotly debated in the Christian Church, and the practice has varied from the most elaborate liturgy, prescribing the garb of the priest and every word and posture, to the simple worship of an old-fashioned Friends' meeting-house. The writer calls to mind two such opposed services, one in a little meetinghouse of orthodox Friends in the Middle West, the other a service conducted by a Baptist minister in a Congregational church and using the full liturgy of the Church of England. But the little company out West and the great congregation in London were filled with the same spirit of devout worship, stirring the heart of the visitor and lifting him toward God. From the standpoint of Jesus the whole question of form in worship is this, "Does it quicken the spirit and help men to express what is in them?" The answer will be different with different congregations and different individuals. The so-called "free worship" may be slovenly, irreverent, and as perfunctory as the use of any ritual. The form, on the other hand, may be filled with the spirit of sincerity and devoutness.

CHAPTER XXII

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF HIS MISSION

Looking back, it is not hard to see what Jesus accomplished. But no man can tell the whole story of that deed, for in the first place the deed is so great, and in the second place it is not yet finished. How did Jesus conceive the purpose of his life? What did he feel that he was sent to do?

It might be well at the beginning to call upon members of the class for answers to these questions. Ask them to support their answers by reference either to some saying of Jesus, or to what he did. Back of these many answers, can we find one great purpose that will include them all? It is not necessary that we should all give this great purpose in the same language. The important point is that we make it large enough. Refuse to accept general answers. Some one says: "He came to redeem the world." What do you mean by redeem? Do you mean simply to save from the penalty of sin? To save from hell and bring to heaven? And what do you mean by the world? Do you mean a few saints who are to be carried to the skies? Or do you mean that all the life of this world is to be filled with the life of God? That is what we have been discussing as the Kingdom of God.

If this was Jesus' great purpose, what did he come to do in order to fulfill it? Thus we come to "the work of Christ." Here is a fine opportunity to fill with life and meaning some old doctrines that have grown empty and meaningless for many people. There are certain goals that the teacher might well set for himself in teaching this lesson:

1. Make clear that the life and work of Christ are one. His life was not a preliminary to his death. His death has no virtue apart from his life. His work was one work from the beginning. All that he did bore upon the one end, and all was necessary to it. Through it all, in life as in death, there was the same spirit of love to men and loyalty to God.

2. Make clear that his work was varied, and that every part of it was necessary. What would his death have meant had not his message preceded it? And what would his message of love for men and faith in God have been without that life of service and unselfish devotion and absolute trust and obedience? And then consider how his death completed all that went before. Here he showed his supreme faith in God, here was seen the final proof of his loyal devotion, and here men have ever seen an evidence of love that cannot be gainsaid.

3. Turning away from elaborate doctrines of the atonement, try to make the death of Christ the rich and vital fact that it is. Show how all his life led to it and would have been incomplete without it. Show how it filled the mind and the heart of the early church. Then ask the members of the class, not for their theories about it, but for what the death of Christ means for their thought and in their life.

Notes and Comments

NOT TO BE LITERALIZED.—The words of Jesus concerning his death have often been misused by being literalized. The great truth in his picture of the ransom was that he was redeeming men from the slavery of sin at a great cost. Press these words too far and you at once get into difficulties. To whom was the ransom paid? To Satan? So it was once held, but we repudiate the thought. To God? How can that be, since Jesus is redeeming men not from God but for God? The same fault lies with the theories that imply that Jesus' death did something to God or paid something to him so that he would or could forgive men. It was not God that Jesus needed to move, but men. The most precious fact of our faith is that it is the love and purpose of God which appear in the cross; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." There was no need to placate an angry God or to pay off an account or to suffer a fixed penalty which some one had to bear. The forgiving God was ready. But man was not, and it is the love of Jesus Christ that went into death that has wrought in men penitence for sin, faith in God, and the devotion of a new life.

CHAPTER XXIII

JESUS' CONCEPTION OF HIS PERSON

NOTE that the subject of this chapter is not the church's doctrine concerning Jesus, but what Jesus thought and taught of himself. It is well to make this plain first before we go on, at the close, to speak of anything else.

We have here one of the richest lessons of our course. It will repay the most careful study and it should quicken the most eager thought. On the one hand, note how little Jesus says of himself and especially how little he asks for himself, how unassumingly he begins his work, how humbly he carries it on as a plain man among men and as the servant of other men. On the other hand, note the astonishing claims that are contained in some of the words that he speaks in a matter-of-fact manner. What should we think of a man who said things like that to-day?

Begin now with what was deepest in Jesus' own life and experience. Remember that we are studying this from his own standpoint. Show how simple this fact of sonship was as seen in the temple visit story, or as revealed in such a prayer as that in Gethsemane. Here he stands right by our side. We are to feel that way, pray that way. Then note how high this sonship leads, and how it sets him apart from us as well as joins him to us. Do not go too far in trying to understand this as metaphysics. Keep it in the plane of religion and of experience. The highest word that Jesus speaks about his sonship does not try to set forth the hidden mysteries of God's inner being, but is joined to the thought of his work for men. The way to understand Jesus as Son of God is to know him as the one who shows God and brings God.

That brings us naturally to the consideration of Jesus as Saviour. There are three profitable questions to consider:

(1) What place did this thought have in Jesus' own mind? Note what he says about the purpose of his coming, and show how his life from beginning to end illustrates this.

(2) What did he do for the men of his time, especially for his disciples, which makes him Saver, or Saviour? Do not be content with general expressions, but take specific instances. What did he do, for example, for Peter?

(3) What does he do for men to-day, for society?

In natural order now we come to Jesus as Master. Why did Jesus assert his authority? Why did he demand that men listen to his word? Why did he make their acceptance of his message the thing that should decide their life? Why did he demand that they leave all and follow him, that they give up all for him? None of these things he asked for his own sake, or simply because he held himself as Lord of men. He was first of all the servant and Saver of men, and that was why he asked these things. Just because he was Saviour, because he had the truth and the life for men, he was the Lord of men.

Notes and Comments

How to Present Jesus To-Day.—It is of the greatest importance that we do not forget the method of Jesus. Too often the church has held before men a doctrine of Christ, and has said, Accept this, believe this. But no man becomes a follower of Jesus by saying "Lord, Lord," by calling him Son of God, or by repeating any creed or accepting a doctrine. To demand this is often to put a stumblingblock in the way of children, and to keep men from Jesus himself. It is ours rather to set Jesus before men, to show them his life, his spirit, his word; to follow the writers of our Gospels whose great ambition seems to have been not to describe Jesus or explain him or put him in a doctrine, but to let him live and speak before men. Set him forth in this way and men will see in him the love and the life of God, and will say at last, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And such faith Jesus wants, the faith of the heart that trusts and of the will that obeys.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AS SEEN IN HIS RELATION TO MEN AND TO HIS WORK

A MAN'S character is seen in his relation to men, to his world and work, to God, and to himself. We are taking two lessons for this great theme, and are taking two of these relations in each lesson. These lessons should accomplish at least two things:

(1) Make your class see that Jesus is the greatest asset of Christianity, that he himself is greater than any word of his, than any deed in which he revealed himself, and that there can be no higher study in Christianity than Christ.

(2) Bring out the meaning of Jesus' character for our own life. There is that in the character of Jesus which lifts him above us, but the most important study, after all, is to ask what his life means for us. There have been times when men talked a great deal about what Christ did for them, about the doctrine of justification and salvation by grace, but forgot to ask earnestly enough what Christ meant when they went out to live. That is our great problem to-day.

We cannot take up all the qualities of Jesus' character in relation to men in so brief a space. If time permits, ask the class to speak of other aspects of his character; only see that the next lesson is not anticipated.

In treating the friendliness of Jesus, emphasize its human character. There are men who seem to have a "genius for friendship." They are sympathetic, interested in their fellows, loyal to those whom they love. Count up these qualities, then note that all these in purest form are in Jesus, and much more. Note how men were drawn to him, not simply as the great Teacher and Healer, but as a man, a friend.

As friend, Jesus seems more a man with men. In his love and pity we see him still close to his fellows and yet at the

same time more like some great spirit of strength and divine compassion, taking the burdens of all the weak upon himself.

The loneliness of Jesus is a most suggestive theme. We have two great duties here: we must stand with men, and we must know how to stand by ourselves. Note how many men run to extremes here. Some stand aloof from their fellows, are selfish and individualistic. Some do not seem to know how to be friendly. Others let their sympathies run into weakness. They cannot bear to stand against others, to sacrifice the good will or kindly feeling of their fellows. How perfect Jesus was in both, without sacrifice of either to the other! "Severity" may be the wrong word here. Make plain how the very love and loyalty of Jesus, his loyalty to men as well as to God, sometimes compelled such words. Are we ever false because we do not dare to seem unkind? On the other hand, are men not sometimes censorious, unjust, even violent, while they claim to be following Jesus in denouncing sin? One must have the utterly unselfish love and good will of Jesus before he can safely exercise the severity of Jesus.

We have not made enough of the loyalty of Jesus in studying his character. Can anything take the place in life of this simple steadfastness in right and service? How it sustained and guided him! How near to us he comes in those conflicts where he faces this question of loyalty to his Father's will! On the other hand, note that this obedient will of his was not something cold and calculating, not a mere matter of a determined will. The will of God was the supreme passion of his life. Is that true of us?

CHAPTER XXV

THE CHARACTER OF JESUS AS SEEN IN HIS PERSONAL LIFE AND RELATION WITH GOD

HERE again is a theme full of inspiration and profit. It is important to avoid mere general statements. Make the lesson concrete by continually calling for instances and illustrations from the Gospels to support what is said of Jesus' character. Make it practical by continual reference to our own life and needs.

The great task of Jesus was to lead men into the life of sonship. To this end his great means was his own life in which he set forth what it meant to be a son. We must never forget that he had problems and temptations here as we have.

Let the class bring out any other qualities that have to do with Jesus' life with his Father. The praying of Jesus may well be considered here. Nothing illustrates so clearly and wonderfully his dependence upon God, his temptations and struggles, and at the same time the victory of his spirit. We need to study this again and again in order to quicken in us the sense of our need of prayer. If he needed thus to pray, how much more do we?

In studying the purity, or sinlessness, of Jesus, note this very remarkable fact: The synoptic Gospels do not assert his sinlessness or explain it, and yet it is perfectly clear as a part of their picture of Jesus. It was not invented by them, but was in the life which they set forth.

Our special emphasis should be, however, on the positiveness of Jesus' character. It is so easy for religious folks to put the emphasis upon the negative; it is so much harder in life to make our righteousness positive. That is the note with Jesus. His goodness was a goodness that counted. Are there any "good" folks in your community that do not count much when the fight is on against any great evil?

Because the spirit of Jesus was wholesome it was also attractive. He made goodness lovable and beautiful. Earnest men sometimes become a little unbalanced. Jesus was the most earnest man of all time, but he was also the sanest and best balanced. Of course some people thought him unbalanced, but that was just because they put lesser things in the place of the high values of life which moved him to action.

Nothing more clearly and strikingly reveals the completeness and perfectness of the character of Jesus than the fact that he has been the inspiration of all men and of all times. Bismarck could never have been a typical American. Lincoln belongs to this land and to the day in which he lived. But every man of any age who once really sees the spirit of Jesus Christ says, "That is the man that I ought to be."

Notes and Comments

THE SELF-RESTRAINT OF JESUS.—Nowhere is the moral power and the positiveness of Jesus' character better seen than in his self-mastery. Notably is that evident in his silence before Pilate (Mark 15. 2-5). Another and equally striking aspect is set forth in the lines of Richard Chenevix Trench:

"He might have reared a palace at a word
Who sometimes had not where to lay his head.
Time was when he who nourished crowds with bread
Would not one meal unto himself afford.
He healed another's scratch; his own side bled,
Side, feet, and hands with cruel piercings gored.
Twelve legions girded with angelic sword
Stood at his beck, the scorned and buffeted.
O wonderful, the wonders left undone,
And scarce less wonderful than those he wrought!
O self-restraint surpassing human thought,
To have all power, yet be as having none!
O self-denying love that thought alone
For needs of others, never for its own!"

JESUS GIVES THE FINAL IDEAL.—The problem of conduct and character is as old as the conscience of man. There are

two underlying questions here that concern us all: What ought I to be? How can I attain it? The first is the question of the moral ideal, the second that of moral power. Jesus gives the answer to both. His character, as we have studied it, is the world's final answer to the question as to what man should be. Other teachers have given rules and precepts. Jesus lived a life. He did not add new rules, but he took old words and gave them a new and richer meaning by his life. He has taught us the real meaning of love and righteousness, of purity and humility. He has changed these from mere words to a glorious ideal. He has set forth their meaning in a life so simple that a child may read, so lofty that it still shines far ahead of all our human endeavor, and yet so human that little child and aged saint alike may strive toward it. The glory of Christianity is not a new law, but this supreme Life.

Jesus Answers the Question of Power.—The question of power follows close upon that of the ideal. Here is the final test. To look up to the ideal life is one matter, to become like it is another. That is why men call Jesus not simply Teacher, but Master and Saviour, because he gives men this power of a new life. He does it as he did of old. He, the Son, leads men into sonship with God. He brings them to penitence and desire, and then teaches them to give themselves wholly to God in a great obedient trust. And so he comes to men, not as an example above them, but as a spirit and life within them.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE HEART OF JESUS' MESSAGE—A REVIEW

A REVIEW may be one of the most tiresome of lessons or one of the most interesting and fruitful. To try to go over the whole text at one time would bring the former result. The plan is therefore suggested of grouping all the lessons around three main points: the Christian faith in God according to Jesus, the Christian life, and the Christian hope.

I. The Christian Faith According to Jesus. Note that the heart of Jesus' work as a teacher was here. He had great confidence, and he brought that confidence to men. Nominally only one chapter is given to this subject (III); actually it runs through the whole course; the last chapters on the person and character of Jesus bear especially upon it. Bring out the truth here that the final word for us about what God is, is given us in what Jesus was.

Do not be content to bring out what Jesus taught about God. Show what this faith meant in his own life. Finally show what this faith means for us when it becomes as real as it was for him. If possible, get expressions from members of the class. What does this faith mean in your life? Has this study of Jesus' teaching about God given you any new vision of truth? Where has it helped you?

II. Jesus' Teaching About the Christian Life. Note that Chapters V to IX concern the life with God, Chapters X to XVI deal mainly with man's life with man. The field is very wide here. Make plain the simple principle which underlies it all and which follows from our faith: As God is Father, so we are to be sons. Make this simple principle plain by applications and illustrations selected from the lessons.

Under this second head also close with practical suggestions and applications. What have we gained from this study for our thought of life? What is the most important lesson we

have learned? What is the most important teaching under this head for our day?

III. The Christian Hope. Here again let us make plain the fundamental truth and show how it belongs to the rest of Jesus' teaching. God is our Father: that is the faith. We are to be sons like him: that is the life. Our hope, resting back on the same thought of God, is this: (1) The Father is King, and his rule will surely come; (2) the King is Father, and his coming rule will bring all good to his children and his world.

What, then, is this good that we may expect from such a God who is both power and love?

(1) The overcoming of evil in our own life, which is to grow into his likeness as seen in Jesus Christ.

(2) The overcoming of death and the gift of the life to come.

(3) The final rule (kingdom) of God here on earth as well as in a heavenly realm. Close this part with the same practical questions: Is our hope larger or clearer because of our study? What have we gained here? What do we need to emphasize?

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